

h George III. King of G. B., &c

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T H E

C A B I N E T

C O N F E R E N C E ;

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T E A R S O F M I N I S T R Y .

P R E S E N T

T H E K I N G ,

DUKE OF RICHMOND, || LORD NORTH,
EARL OF SHELBURNE, || LORD G. GERMAINE.

L O N D O N :

Printed for G. KEARSLY (N^o 46) Fleet-street.

M DCC LXXIX.



INTRODUCTION.

A GREAT Personage with parental love for the prosperity of his people, and in obedience to their voice, having divested himself of partial prejudice for men or measures, but those conducive to the general welfare, lately directed a political Conference should be held in his presence, where the important points of the present war might be discussed; where a general disquisition of antecedent measures might be entered into; and where the utility of his ministry might be revised; from a fair examination of those points

points to draw a just and decisive opinion how to conduct the consequent part of the war, and whom to trust with the executive power. The display of eloquence on this occasion would require a Ciceronian pen to recapitulate, therefore far beyond the abilities of the writer, who however, from the most impartial abstract of his memory, gives to the public the following account.



T H E

D U K E O F R I C H M O N D .

T H E
C A B I N E T
C O N F E R E N C E .

THE parties being met, after the usual ceremony of bowing to the throne, Lord North opened the Conference.

L O R D N O R T H .

My lords, I hope we have met here, pursuant to his Majesty's desire, with fair intention, divested of side or party, to discuss before him the important and perilous situation the British empire stands upon, and to draw from our united wisdom some wholesome expedient to secure victory, or an honourable peace.

A

D U K E

DUKE of RICHMOND.

My lord, I deem it an honour to meet gentlemen of your lordship's abilities before my Sovereign, on the fair and impartial ground of discussion; it is what I have long sought after, and never found: interest, prejudice, side, and party, grinding the mind and faculties of man, into the same delinquent or virtuous disposition with the party they espouse. However, my lords, I must own I cannot suppress my feelings, my indignation, to behold the fairest empire in the world, whose arms extended from pole to pole, with its body mutilated and bleeding at every pore, without a physician or a caustic to apply. To investigate those evils has my hearty concurrence; to find an expedient I should be fortunate.

LORD NORTH.

It has been a picture, a language of such nature, that has long involved us, and drawn
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the united powers of the Bourbon family upon our shoulders; false harangue, only at first meant, as the child of local opposition, unbolted the seat of elocution, and in the vocabulary tempest of words, let loose every expression inimical to our prosperity, to our glory; it was hanging up the canvases with our inability painted on it, which, like the portraits of Liliputians, invites the enemy to conquer the effeminated society.

LORD SHELBURNE.

Silence, my lord, would be as criminal in men, when they saw measures pursued by erring obstinacy, subversive of the prosperity of their country, of private rights, as in the concealment of felony, which makes the parties equally culpable—it was the freedom of debate in the tribunes of Rome that kept the existence of their state virtues, great; the moment the arbitrary hand of power commanded within the focus of their own judgments, be they virtuous or vicious, the

temper, the thoughts of the people, the manly nerve relaxed, and each idea supined in the vestment. What pity, my lords, that a few ministers in power, be their heads or hearts ever so great, so corrupted, should have a right to huddle up measures repugnant to co-mutual advantage, and with silver-tongued complaisance connive or enforce every measure, which the passions or absurdity of a sovereign dictate points out ! Liberty, in this predicament, had better yield up her bright throne into one arbitrary hand, than let the greedy multitude of placemen and favourites, selected from the uninhabitable rocks of a Highland captivity, pluck the fruit of the fair tree, until every branch is torn away, one by one, to sooth or gratify their rapacious appetites.—

LORD G. GERMAINE.

I agree with the noble peer, that the freedom of debate is the spirit, the peculiar right of our constitution, a right, I am bold

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to say, as dear to my brother lord in office and to me, as to any two peers of the realm—however, my lord, when that toleration was first granted, it was not supposed or intended to carry with it an infringement upon sovereign prerogative, to unlock the cabinet of its inmost counsels, to elucidate the projected plans of a future campaign, to drag a minister before the House with open confession of his most secret treaties, his private intelligence—yet how have I seen this supposed right exercised?—I have heard, like the thundering gods of the angry elements, motion upon motion, that we should disclose the confidential papers of our offices; I have heard every suspected plank, every vulnerable spot in our navy, chalked out for the enemy to fire at, nay even those evils magnified; I have seen every defenceless spot of our empire portrayed to our foes; I have heard rebellion, like the Hydra rearing its enormous hundred heads, in every part of the British empire; I have
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heard fair declamation turned into personal
 invectives, and the bile of disappointment
 pour forth on a minister in a black deluge
 of inspiring oratory, from whence arose
 the sparks of venal virtue that flew across
 the Atlantic, and kindled the fires in an
 American clime.—Lights, like the basilisk,
 that only invite to destruction, such are
 the fruits we derive from opposition—
 fruits like the golden apple, that is likely
 to lose us the fairest empire in the world.

DUKE of RICHMOND.

My lord, to accuse a party of venal vir-
 tue, whose fingers are carefully kept from
 the sweets of administration, is a speech
 in logic that falsifies itself.—It is you,
 my lord, and that noble peer in the blue
 riband, who seem to have bulged with that
 sweet liquorice you allude to. I am far
 from condemning or envying any man,
 when placed in the flower garden, to cut
 down the luxuriant shoots to decorate him-
 self and family; that star is a pretty bouquet
 which

which his lordship wears; and if he has secured for his family the best reversionary drops in the kingdom, I hope his lordship's services will justify the royal gift: as yet the Public have no great reason to rejoice.—I will allow that virtue and integrity are so thinly sown in this soil, that the followers of it, like Cicero or Cato, fall by their own greatness—the principled man is now the monster of the day—like a discordant violin to the first fiddle, he is turned out of the *orchestra*. To be great, Sirs, is to beat time with a watchful ear to our first performer, and to keep in unison from Buckingham-house to St. Stephen's.—To be exiled for my want of finger and ear I glory at, my organs are suited I hope for British sounds of prosperity; I glory again at the noble contemporaries who are as discordant as myself, and who are to travel with me into Siberian exile, whilst to the more humiliating sons of ministerial corruption, we leave that venal virtue which your lordship al-

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cludes to; but, previous to our departure, we will go to the font and purify from the devastation—the misfortunes of our country.—On the recited enquiry into the state of the navy, we found our ships a decayed type of the invulnerable defence of England,—we rapped at the admiralty, and there we found the first Lord solacing, like Marc Anthony, in the arms of his fair Cleopatra, or England all lost—we foretold of the armaments, and the duplicit designs of France and Spain; our informations were truths: we have lost the dominion of the seas, and the sovereignty of commerce, nor know we what we have lost—yet fair victory holds no balance against us—it is the blunders of our councils; like men inchaos'd, who know not where first to clear away, our plans, like edifices of cards, fall for want of cement—Charles Town is lost for want of timely reinforcement—Burgoyne left a prey—our islands dropping off like falling stars—our fleets drove into harbour with every cable's length

length of a westerly wind, and merits little more than the name of coasters ; but alas ! where will the catalogue of misfortunes end ? Where shall we look for the cause ? —A British heart ought to be animated at such a direful scene ; however, my lords, I shall withhold my further opinion until I hear the proposals which your lordship has to make.

L O R D N O R T H .

Were I to indulge myself with a justification of my conduct, and of the measures pursued by me, I hope I could shew as clean a hand and as honest a heart for the prosperity of my country, as any of those mighty boasters, whose patriotism, like the steel, requires only a magnetic touch to make them pliant ; and who, from no private virtue, shove against administration, but from a desire of holding those very places which they affect to despise : however, my lords, as investigation of past acts would only now new involve and

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Run us over the beaten course of either propitious or unfortunate events, I shall at present confine myself to the more important business, of laying before your lordships four points for our future discussion.

The first, my lords, is relative to our carrying on a general or partial war with France, Spain, and America.

My second proposition, Whether granting the Americans independence, and withdrawing our troops from thence, would be for the best?

Thirdly, Whether ceding Minorca to Russia for a stipend of ships and troops would not be politic?

Fourthly, What indulgencies we ought to give the Irish?

DUKE of RICHMOND.

My lord, propositions of such mighty importance to the state, requiring more time to investigate than a moment's notice, I cannot with precision speak to the
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questions: at present, however, my lord, on the superficial ground, I shall deliver my sentiments—sentiments that are the genuine offspring of my purest affection for this country. My lords, as to a general war, we ought first to view our own strength, our supplies, our alliances, and carefully compare them and contrast those with the extent of the belligerent parties against us; if this proposition be a fair one, we see at present a superior force against us, without a hope of overturning the balance. France and Spain certainly out-number us in ships of war at sea; the cruisers of America annoy us most in our traffic, as they spread into those seas where we are most vulnerable. The land-forces and the finances of the combined parties are treble our utmost boast—the retrospective view of a few years back shews us, how little able we are to conquer America; unaided, unassisted, she baffled our greatest force: what then will she be with the two greatest and most conveni-

ent powers of Europe to espouse her cause, to fight her battles, to pour into her empty coffers the sinews of war, the golden ore of the East; to supply her, in case of necessity, with men, ships, and all the implements of war, until we are, similar to the siege of Troy, wasted of men, money, and supplies, until the body is drained of all its juices, and falls into an apoplexy, or at best into a paralytic of enfeebled existence? My lords, in a situation of this kind it is not right, rage, or resentment that establishes a justification of our present measures, it is in the glass of our own prudence we are to look for expedients. If the Americans acted with ingratitude, the stain is theirs, they abide the consequence, and barter submissive obedience for personal independence: whether this be, in the great scale of nature, a vice or a virtue I shall not pretend to decide upon. In the predicament we now are, why should not prudent policy direct us, and try to catch those men by

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the tender tie of country, friend, and natural alliance, that yet may remain unsevered from their bosoms? If the team grows too forcible for the driver's hand, he must let go some links to make the rest within his manage. To whom then is the sacrifice of the link to be made? If to France and Spain, we leave them absolute masters of the ocean. If to America, we let go a shadow of right which may revert back from policy and convenience; at best a great part will follow: besides, it is frantic policy to suppose, that now the idea of independence is broached in that quarter of the globe best situated for empire, with a soldiering race of inhabitants, shall be kept in subjection by a remote island, 3000 miles distant. Such are the reasons, my lords, that predilect me in favour of offering independence to the Americans upon reasonable terms. My terms should be ceding them the thirteen provinces, reserving to ourselves the towns of Boston, New York, and Charles Town, with a power

power of a free and unmolested trade to such towns; the same to be fortified and garrisoned by 6000 British troops, with such other clauses as should be found expedient between the parties; thus, turning the edge of the rest of our American forces against France and Spain, an offensive war would take place on our side, and something gained. Their islands would tremble or fall to our armaments—millions would be annually saved, and an enemy created for Spain by the independence of America, that must, in a short time, seize on Mexico and Peru, and render a Spaniard, in a southern clime, as great a novelty as the emperor of Morocco at Madrid. Thus, we should be enabled to balance against the family compact, and render the west, north, and south the property of Britons. My lords, slightly touching those points, I beg leave to proceed to my lord's third proposition of Minorca. To amputate from the crown any of her territorial possessions, I am well aware

aware is of a dangerous policy ; yet as in the torpid body a part must be cut away to save the rest, in a similar case I am for ceding Minorca to Russia on proper adequates—the moment is now arrived in which the race must be decided, a dead heat will not answer our purpose, we must be conquerors or give up the contest in future ; our nerves are already stretched, and if kept so on peace establishment to watch our enemies, the cordage must give way. If we ride triumphant in the Mediterranean, all the ports of Italy will open to us ; if we are beaten, Minorca is of no utility, as at present, no more than an expensive rock to us in the Mediterranean ; by placing it in the hands of Russia, we leave a formidable centinel at the back door of France, with whom she will not willingly quarrel ; we grow an armament there for ourselves to succour our designs ; we gain strength by the addition of the garrison to our local body, to our islands, or to Ireland : thus, not entirely

tirely depending on the caprice of a wind, or a naval force, we stand invulnerable in our possessions, not risking all on the event of a day. Those, my lords, are my opinion at present ; opinion, however, I am not wedded to, but ready to give up on hearing more solid, and of more utility offered. As to the last proposition of my lord's relative to Ireland, I shall rest my judgment upon my noble friend's here ; his consanguinity, his knowledge of that unfortunate and ill-fated country, best intitle him to elucidate the subject ; if to my share any of that business falls, I am ready to devote myself to her service.

LORD G. GERMAINE.

I find a secret satisfaction in offering my opinion on a subject, which seems so ably understood by your lordships ; an opinion, if founded on reason and justice, conviction may follow. To this want of
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condescension, my lords, we owe the origin of the unfortunate subject of debate. Men, phalanxed now by party, have no organs to hear reason ; like pioneers they go to undermine and dig away the fairest pile, if fabricated by opposite hands ; but, my lords, this is a transgression from our topic ; let me revert. The proposition now before us, only tending to the sound policy of pursuing or relinquishing the American war, I shall not revert to the origin, or the result, but view things as they now stand. When we view America as a dominion, annexed to this country by every right that links empire together ; when we examine what she has cost us through the different stages of her infancy, of her protection the last war ; when we consider that we have no indemnification for our expenditures, but the balance of her commerce ; it becomes a painful sensation to think of relinquishing so dear-bought a share, of granting away two millions of our subjects, the planting

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of our vegetation, blood, and kindred, and placing in the hands of the child the weapon and means of destroying the parent. This, my lords, is the object of the war, an object founded in humanity, and supported by kingly love for his people, to take them out of the hands of congress tyrants and oppressors. Let me, my lords, for a moment suppose we cede independence to America, and see what is likely to follow: the object of that growing power will be to seize those necessities of life, that can render their uncommon population and vegetation luxuriant; our coffee, sugar, and rum islands must therefore fall to them an easy conquest, unless defended by a formidable fleet at peace establishment, and an army at least of 20,000 men: if a foresight in policy, therefore, makes this cession inadmissible, the struggle is worthy of our best efforts; it is not so much labouring for ourselves as for posterity, and to recall a misguided people to order and prosperity; if in this pursuit we were

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unanimous, we should defy the powers of Europe to subdue us ; if divided, each party will fall an easy prey to the futility and designs of the French monarchy— One step further : The observation of the noble lord who spoke last, that amputation in an empire is a dangerous expedient, and ought to be resisted with mighty fortitude, is so great a truth, that I must adhere to that principle ; lop a tree of its branches, and the trunk sucks in every tempest, which soon creates a general decay. Therefore, if America be not worth contending and drawing the sword for, no other part of our dominions is worth a single contest. Ireland may well say, we will withdraw our subjugation ; our islands the same ; whilst England is left with the husks of the provisions she fed her ungrateful colonies with from childhood to maturity ; left with one hundred and fifty millions on her back, the result of her expenditure for her people. My lords, to estimate the expence of protecting property by the

value of the part attacked is futile reasoning; let but encroachment take an acre out of a million, and you would soon find purloiners for the entire; acquiescence gives encouragement, till the wreck becomes general. This picture, I think, sanctifies our struggle and waste of treasure for subjugating America. Much, my lords, has been said, with laboured lungs, of the inability of our state, of our revenues being consumptive, of our manufactures being supined, our ardour damped, of the national credit being bankrupt, with a million of conjectural misfortunes both by sea and land; yet, my lords, we find we have resources formidable, our strength never at one period greater, nor the public supplies easier obtained; 400,000 British forces now array under arms, our navy bidding fair singly to dictate laws to the ocean; nor is the day far off when we shall ride triumphant. If our successes in America have

not

not been complete, it was to our humanity at first we owe the misfortune; yet the greater part of the people's minds are with us, and only wait for protection to declare in our favour; we have that protection to give them, and they shall have it; we have fortitude, and we will exert it; nor shall America ever hold or enjoy independence from any other hand but that of Great Britain. To this desirable end, my lords, I see but one impediment, and this impediment exists in party; it is in the senate of this country that America fought her battles; and alas! it is to the senate of this country she owes her rebellious existence: but, unanimity, my lords, which now begins to dawn, will soon overturn the baneful doctrine, and this country, like Samson in strength, lay her shoulders to the mansion of Discord. As to his lordship's third proposition of ceding Minorca to Russia, I am partly of opinion with the noble lord who spoke last; however, as those objects vary
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LORD SHELBURNE.

My lord, I have listened with pleasure to many of those musical sounds, so animating to the souls of Britons, as freedom, right, gratitude, expenditures, &c. which in the course of debate you threw out.—My lords, there is no man wishes to support the dignity of those words more than I do, when not contrasted with the greater idea of general freedom—right, my lords, in the general establishment of empire, seems to me only the child of power, and of the sword; nor do I know in the history of the world, save the ab originis, an acre of land that has not been got, an empire that has not been formed, by slaughter, devastation, cruelty, and corruption.—From whence arose the Roman
right

right to the territories they enjoyed?—Power.—Whence the Norman, Saxon, and Danish right to England?—The Sword.—Whence England's right to Ireland?—Capitulations violated.—Whence K. William's to this country?—Power and party.—How K. George the First?—The voice of the people.—Therefore, if any imperial right under heaven be a fair and just one, it belongs to the illustrious family that now inherits the crown of England—yet if the covenants between royalty and the people are violated, the right devolves back, and the compact ceases.—Further I will go and say, if the people find a better mode of government, which royalty will not accord to, they are equally sanctified to establish it for themselves. Freedom is too great a blessing in this enlightened age to give up tamely; long have mankind worn ministerial chains, chains forged in base measures, and sold to majesty for emoluments, reversions, and honours of disgrace.—My lords, I shall

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shall say to you, as I do humbly to Majesty, that partial perseverance to an unfortunate minister is a royal error. I will not suppose, my lords, that your abilities, your integrity, or your sincere wishes for the public welfare are defective; yet the events arising from your counsels and measures are unfortunate.—If the shepherd's flock grow scabby, or die under his care, change him—if the people bid you to do so, it is an obligation due from you to neighbourly safety, it would be acquitting yourselves, and taking from the people the charge of obstinate *adherence*. Your lordships own feelings (unless the heart is grown callous with splendid luxury, pompous ambition, and ductile flattery) will best display the misfortunes that originated under your counsels.—My lords, to me I own you seem for some years past to be playing at the game of and had nothing real in the existence of your plans; but varnishing over the sale and transfer of our country with ministerial polish

polish of private convenience. Our troops were sent out to America the 27th of May and not yet arrived, that ought to have sailed in March; a general impress is formed when the combined fleets of France and Spain are in the chops of our channel; no one active defence is formed, till the blow is struck against us; a lethargy seems to pervade our senses, until, like Gulliver's flapper, a slap on the cheek awakes us: in the dosing interim America is lost—50,000 brave Britons lost—50 millions of money lost—Dominique, St. Vincents, and the Grenades lost—Gibraltar invested—The dominion of the seas lost, and every other part of our empire in a cold ague of distempered fear. My lords, those are sad situations to behold, sad reflections to reconcile to honour and integrity; and yet thus do ministry, as if infatuated by some hideous ill-boding scorpion to British posterity, direct the machine of state; were the blackest corruption, like incorporating mercury,

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to coagulate their veins, were wisdom put to its nicest exertion to deceive, fairer plans could not be suggested for public misfortunes. What pretty tale, my lords, will ministers amuse our next parliament with, when at least twenty-five millions will be found inadequate for our next year's supply—Gentlemen of the House of Commons, I am happy to meet you with propitious information, Gibraltar is not yet taken; Clinton is in safety at New York, with seven miles circumference of the country to walk, fish, and hunt in; Prevost miraculously returned, with above half his army, to Georgia; Byron's fleet defeated, and now in a place of security, with very little more than a third of his sailors dead; and Hardy safe and sound at Portsmouth with forty ships of the line, to encounter at least seventy French and Spaniards.—To heaven I appeal, my Lord North: I feel for you; I feel for a man whom I think means well, to be obliged to make such an open confession

fession of his misfortunes : if you mean
 to remain in office, my lord, until you
 put the extinguisher on the light, say so,
 that we may prepare a torch to light us
 into a dungeon ; or say, my lord, you will
 try some other expedient ; try the Ameri-
 cans on the plan the duke of Richmond
 pointed out, or some better if found :
 they shew you they have British blood,
 British fortitude, which will cement with
 proper overtures, as true courage knows
 no animosity. Believe not the reports,
 my lord, of flighty refugees, or venal
 pensmen, that this or that part of Ame-
 rica is attached to us ; they are unanimous
 as to independence : behold, my lord, the
 Hydra-headed multitude that grew up
 against General Burgoyne ; the multitude
 that formed against Prevost ; the num-
 bers to surround Colonel Matthews ; if
 we conquer to-day, we are compelled to
 relinquish it to-morrow, therefore victory
 to us is a misfortune. Again then, my
 lord, I repeat, let us relax, let us be re-

D 2 *conquered and conciled*

conciled to those men; let not the turpitude of our tempers dash us against rocks we cannot subdue; let our resentment be directed where it ought, which shall have every support, every nerve of mine to execute. As to the alliance with Russia, it is sound policy to embrace it; a good second in all martial situations is wisdom: twenty sail of Russian ships would secure us the superiority of the seas. Our fortitude, I hope, there is no doubt of; such an accession to our naval strength, supported by the troops we have in America, will make for us adequate conquest of perhaps Martinique, the Havannah, or some other islands; unanimity will prevail, and the stagnated juices of England once more put into circulation.

Now, as to Ireland: my lords, to go into the history of the noble race of men that for ages occupied that country, is, to men so historically informed as your lordships, needless; however, it will be found, that leagues with men of ancient
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and renowned honour are the most safe and durable ; this elucidates also that subjugation with such men to sovereignty is viewed with fond and sacred obligation ; with such sentiments were the Irish bound to the Stewart family ; they fought, they followed, they lost their fortunes through their steady and uniform attachment to them ; and were James any thing but a pusillanimous coward, doubtful the event of conquest, however abdicated, they fell under a capitulation of iron obduracy, more tyrannic than the history of barbarism can feature ; a penal law, the door of villany, was opened upon them ; a persecution for religious tenets, debilitated from holding durable property, oppression upon oppression was their portion, and yet through two rebellions in England those unfortunate wretches held in humble allegiance. Not deeming this sufficient punishment, we laid hands on all their trade laws, the post-office, the jurisdiction in appeals from the house of lords,

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took the tools out of their hands from the means of commerce, ship-building of above a confined tonnage, the export of woollen goods, the import of every kind unless from England, closed their ports by a three years embargo: in short, left them nothing free but the vibrating air, which was deemed by many on this side too great a blessing: yet the happy situation of the country, climate, and soil, with the industry of the people, placed in the year fifty-three in their treasury a redundancy of 300,000 l. Good heaven! the monsters of this country gaped at it, and soon swallowed the operation of our œconomy. Ireland became then the object of pensions and places, new excise-boards, stamp-commissioners, provincial surveyors, and barrack-masters, augmentations, tontines, and the devil, until her revenues were purloined, her treasury emptied, and above two million of debt incurred. Even in this moment of distress, when left unprotected, open to the sword of hostility,

open

open to the insult of every twenty-gun privateer, Scotch and English pensions are laid on : what returns have they made ? Humble addresses of their loyalty, associations for self-defence, and a general offer of life and fortune for the support of his majesty's administration. “ Degenerated “ people !” who held the sceptre in their hands, and wore diadems on their heads, to lick the foot that oppresses them ; for I am bold to say, were they tributaries to the cham of Tartary, they would enjoy more indulgencies than under the present yoke—majesty, I am satisfied, holds no share in these oppressions : it is you, my lords, who measure out with niggardly hands every proposed advantage for that self-submissive people ; you who add insult to their misery, by giving them ideal benefits impervious to time : I hope, my lords, your next bill of utility for them will be, for leave to export their green tea, the growth of Ireland, to Japan ; that, with their tobacco plant, will be sufficient

sufficient for another century. I am warm, my lords, my country's cries demand it from me—now we are told, as a royal indulgence, the king intends to compliment the Irish with the benefits of the Irish post-office, provided the Irish members surrender their privilege of franking letters, both estimated at 120,000 l. per annum—mighty matter! Who benefits by this benevolence? I will tell you; the crown only, the better to support their arbitrary strides, their venal crew. Millions, my lords, poured into the treasury of Ireland would only increase the torrent of corruption, and render the object of English plunderers more fierce and pointed. If you mean, my lords, to give real advantages to them, combine them under a general idea as brethren, take them to your bosoms, the alliance is no disgrace; cancel their trade restraints, and see how they will prosper under an administration of more benignity; let justice hold the scale, and let the balance fall

fall where it should, into the lap of the parent-country ; be their imports as partial as you please, let the parent have the right of offering nutriment, the child of vending the produce of his labour, air, and soil : thus, by smoothing the frowns of the Irish, allying with the Americans, calling Russia to our aid, and soothing with the Dutch, England again will be what she was in sixty-two, the greatest and most formidable empire in the world.

LORD NORTH.

Were I, in the course of my parliamentary business, to pay the smallest attention to the vindictives of opposition, I should have but little time to attend to my more necessary and essential duties ; therefore, my lords, as hungry beasts, eager for food, generally spatter most, I am better pleased to apply the brush to my besoiled garments, than for a fattin gloss, the fond panegyric of opposition,

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to

to act in contradiction to my duty to my king and country; nor do I remember any period wherein I had more occasion for this cleansing, than from your lordships hands.—My lords, to endeavour to turn the general course of the mind, from giving applause to ill-founded prosperity, or disgrace to the best formed, but unfortunate plans, would be insane labour. Was I blessed with prescience, I should hold myself accountable for my designs; but my God I call to witness, that every affirmative I ever gave in council was the warmest affirmative of my heart for the prosperity of the people. To command success is the divine attribute; to form plans of feasible appearances, I am bold to say, were the operations of our councils.—I shall not oblique to whose ill conduct we owe our disappointments, nor shall I attempt to deny or vindicate; but we had many—Yet, my lords, we have fountains untouched of British valour, British supplies, British perseverance. The Grecians

ans were ten years before Troy, often repulsed, often beaten; yet Troy was ransacked, Priam killed, and great Hector slain—nor do I yet despair but America will, like the prodigal child, return to its duty and subjection. If to my station, as first lord of the treasury, any portion of envy falls, how readily would I resign, if consistent with the duty I owe my king and country; though gaudy the scenery to distant eyes, conjecturally placed in pyramids of captivating treasure, I am neither enriched nor benefited by it; my time, my labour I have applied; my tranquillity, I own, I have lost. If my royal master has deemed my assiduities worthy of rewards, and bestowed on my family honours, places, and reversions, pray, my lords, which of you would refuse the offer? and I am bold to say, the descendants of the Earl of Guildford are as honourable and worthy objects of royal favour, as the greatest boaster of Whiggish principles amongst you. My lords, what

are those mighty men that mean to narrow liberal society, and hold themselves as a vestment of steel to royal and parliamentary jurisprudence? — I honour, as highly as any man, the principles of the Revolution, and those sacred names which contributed to it; but where are they now? Who are those clamorous orators that marvel in our ears? — I will tell you—the descendants of the rankest Tories, for despotic and arbitrary government.—When I was called upon to fill the honourable station I now enjoy, it was neither my desire nor wish; the treasury abdicated, and the kingdom in local tremor, I deemed a bad time to become charioteer to a tottering machine—yet I was fortunate in soothing the dispositions of the people; which no sooner happened, than the fire was transferred into an American soil.—To sooth America was also our first object—to reconcile our second—and now to conquer our third. As to ceding away America, my brother lord in office has so amply spoke
to

to that point, that I rest my opinion with his ; but why, my lords, this pale terror ? how long has it been the doctrine of Britons ? It was not the language of the Whigs you boast of ; are their descendants mongrelized ? or is it the old blood of abdication that begins to revive ? The Romans disgraced a senator, who advised the people to submit : Varro never despaired, nor did Prussia shudder, when surrounded by formidable enemies. Can the descendants of George the First be so pusillanimous, to carve away the best joint at their table to every daring rebel, or well polished hypocrite, that violates their rights ? forbid it Heaven ! Yet by this language I would not wish to be understood, that my portion of influence in the council is more than a single voice ; their resolves, to the best of my judgment, I endeavour to execute ; nor do I presume to myself more merit for advantages, nor hold myself more culpable for misfortunes, than the rest of my brethren. To
coalesce

coalesce with America would be my proudest ambition ; I should extend my arms, and grasp them with fond affection to my bosom ; nor would I hesitate to bestow my dearest blood to seal the covenant—yet, my lords, I dread, deluded by the varnished prospect of their delusive treaties with France and Spain, they are hurrying to forge chains for themselves of despotic power, or rendering it necessary for the edge of our sword to be laid to the foundation of their existence.—Roused, and almost unanimous at last, the spring will shew you our fleets returning D’Orvillier’s visit to the Gallic shore ; alliances formed that will rule the world ; supplies that will luxuriously answer all the wants of state ; twenty thousand Britons at least wafting under English canvas to reinforce our American armies ; and phalanxed and invulnerable at home.—The object of Minorca, being the property of parliament, I shall leave to their decision ; however, I own myself a friend to a Russian alliance,

alliance, and if necessary to give a restitution; so far I concur with Lord Shelburne in his general idea on that head. The affairs of Ireland now coming under my consideration, I must first acquit myself of holding delusive baubles to their eyes, or measuring by scanty or niggardly hands their prosperity; were the means of their happiness entirely in my own possession, with cordial and benevolent heart I should give—Give, because I think them a noble and meritorious race of men; brave, honest, and fair, without any of those latent disguises of the heart, that with a smile reads into the feature of the soul, and with dark accord trip up the heels of the constitution they affect to admire.—To deny, my lords, that those men have been chained, narrowed in their commerce since the Revolution, would be a false assertion; the Whiggish principle of that day deemed it sound policy to hold conquest by strong subjection; superstition and popery were then mingled, old prejudices

judices and partialities alive; which gave birth to many wise reasons for viewing Ireland with care and caution. Lord Chatham's wise policy, in placing a confidence in the long-exiled Scotch from our prosperity, gave rise to a new doctrine; they were found firm in our ranks; they legioned under the beat of our drum; the honour of confidence was well repaid; repugnant doctrines to the Hanoverian succession supined, which this day would have existed, if kept to brood in mountains, in the martial bosom of aspiring youth. Elucidating this point, my lords, leads to me a desire of placing in the Irish similar confidence; yet, my lords, how nice, how delicate, is the situation of a minister on this occasion. If arms are put into the hands of the Roman Catholics, comes the roar of opposition, the brand of Tory; if an enlargement of their trade laws, comes the roar of party, of corporate towns: however, with fair investigation, I hope to meet this question; my sentiments are for a large latitude of indulgence

indulgence for Ireland; not inimical to Eng-
 land: with myself I hold no doubt of
 Irish loyalty; their present conduct is
 greater than the highest boast of the great-
 est Roman; nor is such a conduct with-
 out making deep and sensible impresson
 on majesty. However, my lords, it will
 be best to meet on this question with dis-
 passionate tempers, not as sons of logic;
 or Almon's types, to speak away the bu-
 siness in futile substances to form an eigh-
 teen-penny pamphlet; then a medium
 may be found by compromising the uti-
 lity highly beneficial to Ireland, and not
 greatly injurious to this country. One
 matter more, my lords, I have to men-
 tion on this occasion—a general mode of
 redress to Ireland, which is entirely local,
 and depends upon your own humanity,
 without which, I am well informed; all
 legislative interference would be in vain,
 and can only tend to magnify the lordly
 rent-rolls, whilst the lower order of the
 people are kept, with the hand of unre-
 lenting

lenting severity, in misery and oppression. The local complaint I allude to, is in the mode of your letting lands, a mode that has partly drained, into the landlords pockets, the property, the time, and the labour of the tenantry of the kingdom: if I am rightly informed, this is done by advertising the property to the highest bidder, without the smallest consideration for the old occupiers.—Comes the land-jobber, who with desperate fortune takes the entire estate; whole villages are erased, if the unfortunate occupiers do not consent to what this all-grasping tyrant demands.—Lesser tyrants come and quarter out this domaine, under a profit-rent, until the real occupier has oftentimes four tiers of oppressive tyrants to surmount. To this cause, my lords, is ascribed emigration, poverty, and disease—I may add want of consequence, improvement of estate, or a certainty of income. Good God, my lords! is not the prosperity of your tenantry worthy of your tenderest

tenderest care? Is there no Irish humanity to draw the equitable line between the occupier and the fee? Can there be any satisfaction in a luxury, dragged from an half-starved yeomanry, patched in rags, and half-naked to the eye? Can the simple potatoe, nurtered by salt, and diluted with water, not claim your pity? For shame, my lords! first go home and give your people the means of life, of comfort, before you parade here in patriotic characters; for local tyrants can never be the friends of public virtue.—Come, my lords, certify to us, from the hands of your people, your tenantry, that you have local and domestic benevolence; then your voices, like the pure sounds of the loud organ, will charm and convince: besides, it is sound policy to establish the yeomanry in prosperity, as they are the grand nerve of the state: thus combining, my lords, a local with an external enlargement of benefits to the Irish, the constitution of man, and of

the state, will grow into vigour, property will be justly diffused throughout the several orders of the people; and, similar to this country, agriculture and the ornament of the soil will begin to smil. — On the other hand, my lords, should this enlargement of trade be given, as desired, without fair arbitration between landlord and tenant, the fee will only benefit; as the land will bear treble value, the articles for subsistence go hand in hand; and the enlargements of our administration, the sweat and labour of the occupier, be converted into more luxuriant fauces for men, who feed, like cannibals, on the vicissitudes of society. This paper put into my hand, Lord Shelburne, will best recite your lordship's mode of acting to your tenantry. The name of the town is Ballymote, in the county of Sligo, which was built by your lordship's directions, and under large promises of giving each northern weaver a tenement, with further encouragement, occupied where
a large

a large portion of the linen trade was carried on, to the great advantage of the country ; but alas ! this was but a short-lived prosperity, the town being surrounded by your estates, six pounds an acre was demanded for rent, three pounds for the grass for a cow ; until at last those unfortunate emigrants from their country found a land-blockade, or insurmountable famine, which soon put an end to their commerce ; thus perished the industrious bee for want of honey : similar complaints, my lords, have officially come into my hands, against the different lords of this country, who hold property there ; indeed whose doctrine at home is humane and benevolent to tenantry ; but the object removed from our sight seldom creates pity.— However, my lords, as the penal laws are relaxed, which enables Papists to hold long leases, grant them tenures upon equitable terms ; practise yourselves, and teach your sons to despise canting, or dispossessing old tenants who pay their rent ;
by

by which conduct the tenant will dress
and nourish the earth—the earth the grain
—the grain the man, and smiling prosper-
ity will sit in every face.

DUKE of RICHMOND.

Viewing your lordship's observations
under three heads; first, of the duty you
owe your king and country to remain in
office; secondly, the resources of the
state, and the expediency of keeping Ame-
rica; and thirdly, relative to Minorca and
Ireland.—Duty to a people, if I mistake
not, generally arises from a succession of
fortunate events, from originating coun-
cils of wisdom, and giving them life and
animation, by some bold exertion of the
mind, by adding prosperity to their com-
merce, increase to their revenue, or local
content and security to their lives and pro-
perty.—But the reverse of this picture we
have seen; see solemn dulness pervade our
councils, uniform misfortune our expedi-
tions,

tions, our allies smiling at us with splendid contempt, and English faith and fortitude, formerly the pure bullion of the world, now unfit for any other league of confidence, but with those men that neither adhere to God nor principle. — If, my lord, as you represent, you are only the mill-horse of the state, to turn the wheel of other councils into motion, and perhaps get a greater grist, from your peculiar address and skill in milling the constitution into a preparative for Scotch bannock—say so ; your own appetite, if not of that digestive faculty with the ostrich, must be satiated ; though, my lord, I am ready to concur in your humanity, royal mandates have forced upon you an unfortunate load of lucrative employments—*noli episcopari*—those partial violences, from a kingly hand, may reconcile to you the object of your duty ; but, my lord, the people have something due to their murmurs, to their complaints ; but alas ! the murmurs, the petitions

titions of the people are only listened to as the vibrating of the ass, poor beast of burthen, devoted for ministerial ridicule; public calamities laughed at, and our devoted country sacrificed, by a devoted duty to partial plunderers, to the partial opinion of a few.—For shame, my lord, let not degeneracy totally overcome you; nor take the consolation of a nap, to close your senses against the public misfortune of your administration—if unfeigned duty you avow, retire when you see your plans abortive; besides the cream is supped up, nor can you well expect that sovereignty will commit another lucrative violation on your humility—if manacled in your office, or scratched into dozey slumber by some of your Scotch brethren, throw off the scornful chain, revert to the sentiments of the immortal Chatham, who would not be accountable for measures he was not allowed to guide, and retired with the lustre of conquest and glory.—But pray, my lord, how is this brilli-

ant duty of yours to be exemplified?—
 Is it by adhering to the fatal system, for
 which you are paid the wages before-hand,
 until the reality is gone for the shade?
 —Is it in the importance of finance, in
 which blunder upon plunder is com-
 mitted, and the best revenues left uncol-
 lected for want of form or mode?—Or
 is it in that laxative turpitude, which
 makes you more callous to the acute feel-
 ings of the people, than any other mem-
 ber of the legislature? If merit there be
 in this specific duty, I know no man who
 has acquitted himself better than your
 lordship, or fitter for the confidential mi-
 nister of a reprobate and corrupted admi-
 nistration; but this may be easily account-
 ed for, when we see the fortuitous sons of
 upstart accident become the managers of
 the King's closet, the King's ear; the
 managers of the most lucrative and con-
 fidential employments of the state.

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Next,

Next, to consider the resources of the state minutely, in the deplorable consumption they now appear in, would be too frightful even to a distempered humanity; bleeding annually the juices of our vitals into reservoirs of ministerial luxury, or all-erring fatality; and still the constitution, as if attended by empirics, neither aided nor bettered; millions at last become to us delusive, and phantomized beyond the probability of existence.—The book of arithmetic will not soon find out numbers to pen down our expenditures, nor the conjunctive treasure of the world to liquidate it—similar to the giants imaginary pile to lead them to heaven. Long have we built upon public credit; but with a judicious hand your lordship has sprung the mine, and rendered a credit that was somewhat feasible, impossible, by over loading the fee-simple to such a degree, that either the sword, or a bankruptcy, must be the teller of its exchequer.—My lord, without many figures I can shew you, after the new loan for next year

of twenty-four millions is granted, we shall owe two hundred millions ; this sum, at a rateable interest of four per cent. makes eight millions annually ; our military establishment above five, our civil list one, our navy two, our garrisons, repairs, private douceurs, and corruption unlimited ; total about eighteen millions : to support which our greatest revenue never exceeded eleven millions, now, under the auspices of your lordship's duty to the people, reduced to seven ; which shews, that even at peace establishment, cutting away all expenditures for either the army, navy, or civil list, garrisons, or even corruption, that our revenues are deficient to pay the legal interest at the bank of England.—Interest, my lords, is generally the cement that combines mankind ; the loss already of a fourth part of their principal, being reduced from 81 to 60, has sown a languor in the minds of the public, disadvantageous to the public cause ; the idea of being reduced from 60 to 40, from 40 to 20, and from 20 to a cypher, seems to

all wise men a political hypothesis, which your lordship is driving at. Therefore, my lord, go on, borrow twenty-four millions for 1780, borrow thirty-four millions for 81, forty-four for 82, until the entire is reduced to a Bobadil idea of farcical imposition, or gulped down in oblivion, by a military bayonet to the breast of the possessor, of the imaginary treasure. Dexterous, my lord, in this refinement of political deception, the public you have made Scrip and Omnium mad with delusive prosperity, each grappling for the golden bait of uncyphered reality. Give, my lord, on your next loan 20 per cent. the year following 30 per cent. next 50; all will be equally paid. This deplorable state of finance scouts out of my mind all idea of being able to carry on a general war. If there be any redemption left for us, it is by a well-timed policy to re-unite with America, either as friends or allies; a substantive we cannot pretend to be at present. Credulity has sapped our foundation,

foundation, and the ovations of ministry over a virtuous opposition substituted for a conquest of satisfactory importance over our enemies. In the imagery of your lordship's elocution you are pleased to ask, Who are those clamorous Whigs that marvel in your ear? I will return the compliment, and tell you (don't start, my lord, and turn pale) they are the men who kept the constitution pure, from foul usurpation, and dragged ministers from their fattening ground of treasury corruption;—such men yet exist, friends to the rights and liberties of mankind, to Magna Charta, and to British freedom—if a friend to the people, a friend to that virtuous valour which you tell us you inherit.—Why not anticipate with France and Spain before an armada more formidable than that under Philip of Spain was formed under your eye? Why not, as an Englishman, ask the cause three years ago, and declare war the moment you found them armed? Will you tell the world

world that credulity was your fault, and that you were deceived. Even after the French memorial was declared, you told us Spain was to continue in neutrality, though arming at every point, like the porcupine, to hit a fatal and deadly blow. To this ministerial politeness we may attribute the yoke of our future slavery; to their pusillanimity, the expiring glory of the British empire.

Disquisition into the affairs of Ireland at this period, disquisition into any of our public matters, until our political hemisphere is better settled, I lament to say, I fear, is of little utility; unanimity is now our only bulwark; and though I reprobate the measures of administration, as tasting of the bitter cup is oftentimes necessary, I shall suppress my private feelings, and go hand in hand, be them ever so soiled, in every useful measure for the support, dignity, honour, and prosperity of my king and country.

L O R D

LORD NORTH.

Were I aware that your lordship would act with your usual turmoil, I should have begged leave to decline this honourable disquisition, as tending to no general use, but to widen party, and to add inflammatories where cooling draughts are wanting; however, my lord, as the feudal man of party, you do honour to your disciplinarian, and go through your exercise with agility.—Yet give me leave to say your professor of arithmetic deceived you, as your calculations are erroneous, and your picture a daub of jaundiced painting of a distempered eye; however, congratulating the country on so great an acquisition of your lordship's unanimity to the general cause, I shall now close the debate.

Lord

LORD SHELBURNE.

My lord, if you hold in you the prerogative of closing the debate, or shutting the black volume of unfortunate events, at option, your indulgence has been greater than your sagacity, in exhibiting the largest ledger of ministerial weakness that ever disgraced the annals of Britain ; however, as I am now before a higher tribunal than your lordship generally directs, where the partizans of treasury corruption impede the flowings of an honest integrity by a previous question, or in high clamour shout the doctrine of an all-grasping and pensioned junto into existence, I hope to enjoy the freedom of debate, the freedom of speaking the sentiments of the injured people, in whose behalf I now appear, and the freedom of elucidating the fatal consequence of adhering to councils pregnant with arbitrary design and machinations of agued fortitude.

[Here

[Here Lord North rose in seeming passion, and interrupted him; when a great personage got up and declared he wished to hear the fair sentiments of his people, and desired Lord Shelburne to proceed.—Lord S. bowed.]

In all states, as in universal vegetation, the prudent hand of the gardener or planter is known by the luxuriance of the plant.—So in empires, from the wisdom of the executive power or ministerial direction prosperity flows, or an eastern blast of contaminated folly nips the fairest blossoms of the vineyard. Richlieu and Mazarine laid the foundation of the French empire—the immortal Chatham of the British. But, alas! my lords, the labour of that great man, the labour of our people, and waste of our treasury, has been soon pulled down; and, like Shakespeare's fabric of a vision, leave not a wreck behind. When Britons come to contemplate and behold

the acquisitions of near three centuries, the acquisitions of all our renowned heroes, the acquisition of ~~our island of~~ Gibraltar, locked out from the Mediterranean, and the dominion of the ocean lost, a bitter reproach is pardonable, and sanctifies a just upbraiding of majesty to hold men in power, who, like Pharaoh, have the vengeful rod of Heaven directed against them; however, my lords, the period is drawing near, when we shall play for our last stake; the auxiliaries of our empire are already torn away.—Can monsters gape and breathe that hurled such destruction on the people!

Let us examine the state of our affairs in America, where after four years war, where after the loss of a captured army and multiplied millions, we possess a molehill of casual durability, we find every plan of ours turn retrograde, for want of cement, or proper knowledge of the situation or circumstance of the
part

part we attack.—Our armies are sported there on perilous expeditions, and led forward through defiles and deadly vapour, on the report of every well-formed intelligence of dark hypocrisy.—Then comes our Te Deum, that a remnant is saved; thus marching and countermarching, our legions moulder; no one well-supported attack formed.—Prevost is left unsupported against Charles Town, the door of the southern colonies, which if joined by Grant's army, who supined in St. Lucia, until heat and disease partly cut them down, the Carolinas and Virginia would this day bow to the British legislature.—

In the West Indies three or more of our islands lost, our fleet beaten and driven into a skulking place of ignominious security; and though a confessed superiority attended us for two years, like unwatchful centinels we rested upon our arms, politely waiting the reinforcement of our enemies; that completed, and ignorant of their strength, we rush forward with

heedless intrepidity and unfortunate disgrace : here was also an oversight of ministry not to strengthen Sir George Macartney with 500 additional troops from Grant's army, which would have bid defiance to the power of France, and render the Grenades safe ; this error only in miniature at St. Lucia, we pursued at home on the broad basis of ignorance. Eighty thousand men were kept in mock skirmishes, under a panic apprehension of an invasion, which never could be the mad intention of the cabinet of France to sacrifice their legions to such a mighty force.

Nay, more I affirm, had France a power to overturn the legislature of this country (which Heaven forbid!) and to place upon the throne a friend to that gilded poison, which in tainted whispers, and high varnished dissimulation of royal and prerogative regards, mingles with our councils, with latent lurkings of old attach-

attachments and arbitrary design; her policy would decline it, as she clearly sees our local disorders must, in a short period, enfeeble and consume the constitution, which she does not wish to retrieve; whilst a new system of politics might invigorate, and perhaps sponge off the multiplied burthens laid on the people by a blind and misguided administration—

[Here Lord G. Germaine called Lord Shelburne to order, when again a great personage, with royal dignity, stood up and spoke.]

THE KING.

Lord Germaine, I hold no order, no mode of speech a justifiable exemption between me and the fair sentiments of my people: truths often, though bitter, may be sweetened by caution and reform, whilst flattery (too often the language exercised

to kings) magnify our errors, and take from us the only lustre royalty gives, of holding the sceptre, as trustees for the general prosperity of the people, pure and inviolate. To Lord Shelburne's candour I am indebted—his bold sentiments do him honour; they delineate facts, and give prescient wisdom to measures. Equally bold I wish the conduct of my council.

To presume I possess more abilities than the medium of men, to hold myself above fault, as the legislature points out, neither the pomp of my situation, nor the adulation of flatterers, have led me to.—To oppose stubborn will, as has been represented, to the advice of my council, is not one of my political maxims; to govern with mildness, and to act with the concurrence of my people, is my utmost glory. Frustrated in this intention by the tormoil of party—a party that has long existed, and will always subsist in similar constitutions with this, where freedom

dom is so precious a part, where the construction of every man's mind and opinion may differ, where gratifications and emoluments must be partial, and turned into court-centinels to guard against that fanatical turbulence so often dangerous to royalty and to empire, where the most virtuous measures will find opponents, and where operose mischiefs at this day point out their existence.—Chosen and confidential men to correct those mischiefs are found necessary to negotiate, to execute the business of the state: if in this choice I have erred, my judgment not my intention stands guilty: to divest sovereignty of the common feelings with man, to amputate from their bosoms regards, partialities, and predilections from men who they think serve their country well, is an exaction of too saturnine a nature to combine with the incumbent benevolence and rewards of majesty.—Early in life I had the honour of being seated upon this throne—early to possess an empire

pire of mighty importance : under the benignity of luxuriant prosperity America rebelled ; to hold inviolate the rights of my people, to hand to posterity the British empire as it devolved upon me, became the object of my most sanguine desire ; to restore her, lenients I applied : I temporized until my humanity was scoffed at, and turned into a weapon of destruction against my people ; the perfidy of France and Spain is opened upon me ; leagues ratified before Heaven have with them no durability ; private assurances of the most sacred nature, of fair design, are used as subtilties of disgraceful hypocrisy, like assassins, who smile and kiss the hand whilst the deadly weapon is conveyed to the heart.—Thus attacked, my lords, do you behold me confiding in the chancery of Heaven, the rectitude of my cause, where fair Justice holds the balance, struggling unsupported by any other power for the preservation of my empire, for the rights of my people,—Thus do you behold me,
like

like Lufignan to his long-lost children, extending my arms to my people, to accord within my bosom; would my lords of opposition come within reach of my embrace, I hold no distinctions in my breast between Whig and Tory; patriot and courtier are synonymous, and have the same interest in the state.—Then, my lords, shall you see a British king resume and reinstate the glory of the British empire; shall you see that chastisement given to our insolent foes which a base and perfidious people merit.—Now I desire Lord Shelburne may proceed in his further illustrations uninterrupted.

[Duke of Richmond begged first to make a short reply.]

DUKE OF RICHMOND.

When majesty condescends to go into a disquisition of his conduct with the people, it becomes an indispensable duty

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on their part to extenuate, and point out the cause on which they build the principles of their opposition; brevity therefore, Sire, is best at present—our public measures have been unfortunate; to the directors of those measures we ascribe the cause; multiplied periods mark our submission to their blunders, until grievances attack the vitals of our existence.—Long the people have called aloud for a change of men and measures—in you, Sire, is the means of redress, or the hand to seal their misfortunes with the prerogative of unrelenting sovereignty.

Domestic wisdom, domestic safety ought to direct this condescension to the people's claims; for should further misfortunes happen under the present ministry, the public will ascribe it to royal perverseness, and perhaps clamour too loud for the voice of reason to correct.—If, on the other hand, the people get a ministry in whom they can confide, their despondency will

will invigorate, their measures combine; they will be responsible for the good or bad effects that may follow, and majesty stand indemnified against the murmurs of an enraged multitude.

In all reciprocal engagements of affection, such as between the sovereign and his people, or from the people to their sovereign, testimonies of esteem ought to be mutual; clashing their swords and sentiments against each other takes off the elastic fire, and blunts the edge against our natural enemies; nor is majesty nor man sanctified, as has already been mentioned, to continue the executive departments of the state in hands obnoxious to the people, whose indispensable and hereditary right it is to judge, whose property, freedom, and blessings they dispose of.— Were your confidential cabinet your friends, Sir, they would speak to you as I do; but their fondness of power and their
lucrative

lucrative employments absorbs the nobler faculties of candid truths, and renders the triumph of fair speech over duplicity inadmissible. — Soothe, Sire, your people; reject partialities and predilections for men, which, though an acknowledged virtue in private life, yet is a dangerous maxim in the more important management of an empire. Few loved Chatham, all admired him; he crouched not in ductile fawnings to the superior hand of power, yet the best friend to majesty that Britain ever saw—By pursuing a conduct of this kind your people will coalesce; and permit me to say, there is no one wish in your royal breast, be it ever so magnanimous, for the weal of your subjects, more sincere than their desire (in which I pray I may be considered) of humiliating themselves before the throne, and sacrificing their lives and fortunes for the support and dignity of so good a king.

LORD

LORD SHELBURNE.

—Had our islands been supplied, had Clinton been succoured with 10,000 out of this body, the war at this day would wear another complexion ; but misfortunes are grown familiar to us, and disasters are become of no magnitude ; our army is cut down by legions at Stoney Point, and eight millions of our property let lie in defenceless water in Ireland without a convoy. Similar, or indeed worse, has the conduct of ministry been at home.

—Let me ask, my lords, how in that moment of fatal danger, when sixty-six ships of the enemy's appeared before our most valuable fortress Plymouth (the first door to our kingdom) was it prepared for defence ? An arsenal without ammunition, cannon without carriages or ramrods, guns without flints, and ball without powder ; neither a garrison suitable, nor provision to stand out a siege ; no one

preparative for resistance ; to Heaven we have trusted for defence, and that Heaven, with the pusillanimity of our enemies, saved us from destruction, saved our first dockyard and naval magazine from blazing the triumph of our enemies, and the disgrace and downfall of the British empire.— Thus our standing army, our generals, are disgraced by limited plans of pale complexion ; our navy, the glory of our ancestors, fairly set before the wind in our channel, to find a sanctuary from a powerful enemy ; our men of war captured.— A common pirate, Paul Jones, left for three months to ravage, burn, and destroy our coasts, our commerce—to take two ships of war, and nearly destroy a valuable Baltic fleet, without a suitable force sent to repel him.— These are objects worthy of majesty's deepest attention to remedy, and call loudly on the part of the people for redress.— To be a minister, my lords, of this country, requires something more than the indolent turpitude

turpitude of a Figurian, or the slow conception of a Minden commander. There's an altitude in the minds of Britons, when properly exercised, that secures success, and triumphs over the most obdurate difficulties—the old adage, that striking the first blow was half the battle, was their military creed—now the mode is changed, we are insulted by half the powers of Europe, and despised by the rest; nor is our animation ever roused until three parts of the conflict is decided against us, the injury done, and the enemy gone; then, like bravoës, we come forward to seek redress.

In all situations of a general direction to an empire, more particularly in the conduct of a war, the supreme council must be viewed with reverential and dignified awe—yours, my lords, is become the derision of valour, as no soldier will believe it sterling; from whence our generals and admirals clash and rend by divisions;

divisions; promises and precedence not adhered to; no rewards, no precedents for glorious achievements; the idea neglected; and Britons grown callous and indifferent in their prosperity under a ministry of disgrace; nor can magnified changes or vicissitudes be deemed a greater misfortune.

When corruption corrodes the constitution, it always enfeebles the maxims of state—like a tottering fabric each supporter requiring double payment for the risque he runs: from this cause we see the business of government neglected in every department, we see our ministry sport the property of the nation to contractors, who in grateful return facilitate the raising of the supplies; we see those contractors exercise every unpunished imposition, our powder defective of its proof, the poor pittance of the soldiers bread purloined, and rendered too bad for even the once hardy Charles of Sweden to eat—nay, a general abuse in all the confidential dealings that ought to be sacred between men.—

men.—Why this toleration? When the fountain is muddy the pure waters of the rivulets are impregnated by its soil; plunder, place, and profit are magnified by each other; no intuitive virtue left to direct the soul.—Each man, like the skilful mariner, packing up for the approaching storm.

My Lord North, you are sagacious in this prescience, and though, like the humble monk, you profess *poverty*, you have pretty well prepared your knapsack for the disastrous moment; not satisfied with the immediate benefits of many royal favours, but to great futurity you have turned your virtuous eyes, and usurp a reversionary grant of the auditor generalship, a place now well worth 20,000 l. a year*, out of the hands of that stanch friend

* Lord North's knapsack opened. — Contents: The auditor-generalship, in time of war, 20,000 l. per ann.—the Cinque Ports, valued at 4000 l. per ann.—the grant of the lands of the duchy of Lancaster, estimated at 4000 l. per ann. more — and the
 K emoluments

friend of administration, the Duke of Newcastle, for your poor impoverished father and your poor unfortunate sons.— Though, my lord, I condemn the measure, I admire your parental care, as a royal provision for your lisping babes become the object of your pious assiduity.— The immortal Chatham had no such wise considerations, the purity of his heart and exalted mind soared above the grapplings of a mental dexterity; to God and his country he left his family—his country, to their immortal honour, have done them justice.

emoluments of the chancellorship of the exchequer, first lord of the treasury, and prime minister, under-rated at 12,000*l.* exclusive of the rangerhip of Bushy Park to his lady, *cum multis aliis*. So that this crying*, disinterested, virtuous minion in office cannot have secured less to himself and family, in possession and reversion (notwithstanding the bankrupt state of the nation) than the enormous sum of 40,000*l.* per ann. and upwards.

* Alluding to the crocodile tears which his lordship shed, and the solemn lie he told in the face of a full house of commons, when charged with monopolizing the most lucrative places and reversions in the gift of the crown.

My noble compeer having spoke minutely to the different propositions laid before us, taking in the state and finance, I shall join my opinion with his.

As the affairs of Ireland are become the object of their parliament, which they intend humbly to lay before majesty for redress, I hope to see the royal wisdom accord with the parliament of this country to take away the rigour of their restraints, and by a cordial benevolence soothe their complaints into a general prosperity for both countries.

To accomplish this long-wished-for utility of a general interest between England and Ireland, a maxim of freedom wise to be followed for a lasting foundation by the rest of our empire; to take off the subordinate cramps, and let each country, each island, enjoy the blessings of their own prosperity, under a well-regulated obedience to the parent, a general interest

would become mutual, and a general intrepidity unsurmountable. Yet should the humble claims of a noble and virtuous people, for an enlargement of freedom, upon the old state trick of having insolent and daring petitions presented by some English manufacturing towns to negative their demands, be denied, and your lordship, like Mahomet, remain suspended in irresolute decision, heedless to the calamities of the people—before my sovereign I declare, I wish their virtuous associations may become a legioned phalanx of self-defence, above the temptations of a corrupted and dastardly ministry to yield up the name of noble volunteers, and enroll in ranks subject to tyrants that long oppressed them, but unite to tear the yoke of English slavery from about their necks, so far as the laws of God, man, and the legislative rights of their country sanctify.

However,

However, Lord North, before I conclude, give me leave to congratulate your country on your great abilities of converting trifles into risible ridicule, and contrasting our greatest misfortunes with a stroke of fancied satire—yet, my lord, whilst, like the laughing philosopher, you are tickled with the joke, and create a broad smile on the face of your honourable compeers of office, like the crying philosopher, your country weeps indeed.

THE KING.

It is needless [interrupting Lord G. Germaine, who had arisen to reply] to add any thing more on the subject. I am thankful to your lordships for your several opinions so amply and dispassionately given.—But the arguments offered by his Grace of Richmond and Lord Shelburne appear so irresistibly convincing, and at the same time to convey the general and almost unanimous sense of my subjects, that

that I should very ill deserve to be considered as the father of my people, if I did not most sincerely concur with their wishes, and change both ministers and measures—now become absolutely necessary, for the preservation and safety of my remaining dominions.

[His Majesty then acquainted Lords North and Germaine, that he had no further occasion for their services, and dismissed them from all their employments.—Hereupon Lord North, with his usual tenderness of disposition, dropped an amber tear of visible regret, which was sympathetically returned by his compeer Lord Germaine, for the loss of their places.]

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